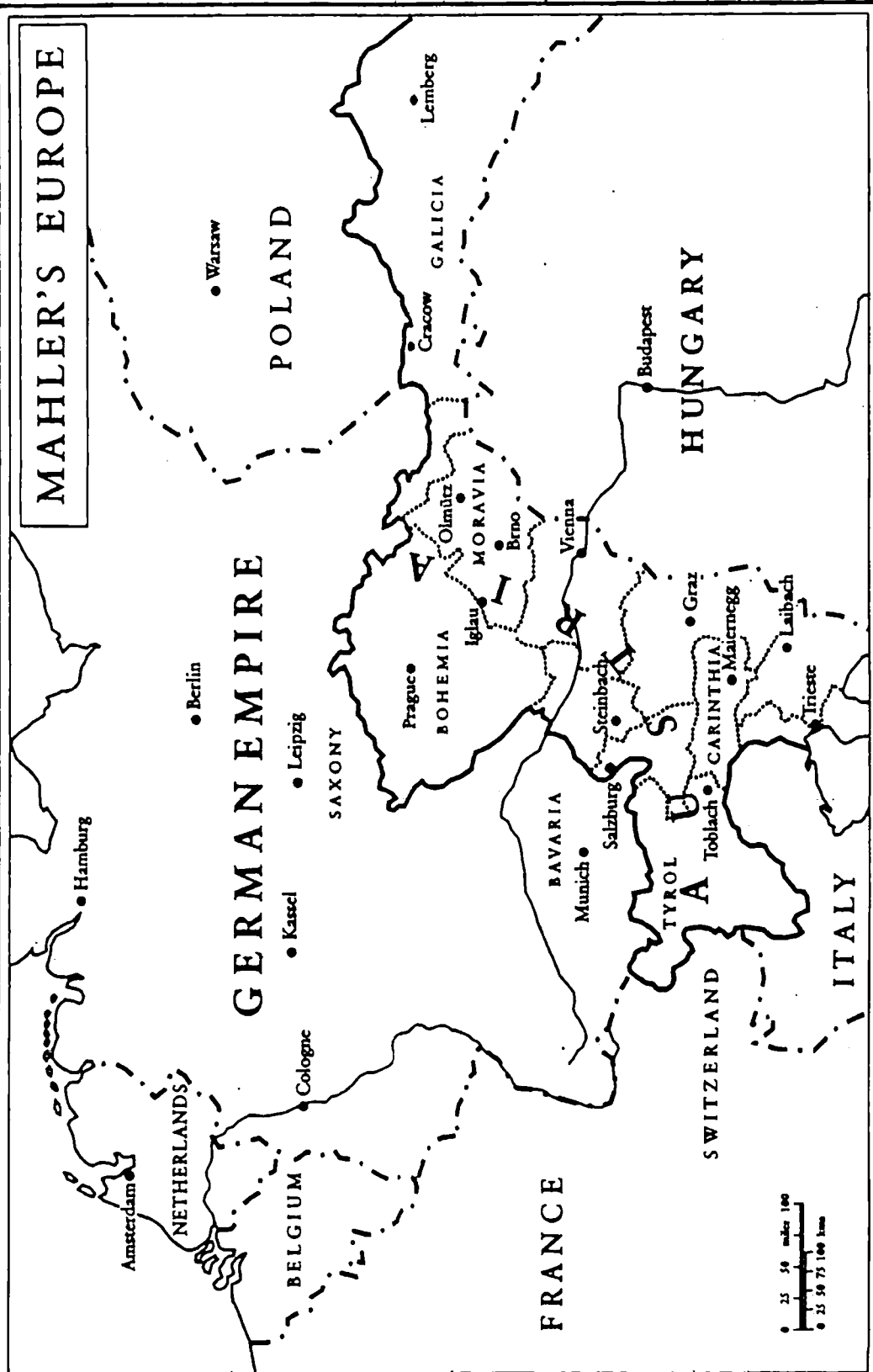


# MAHLER'S EUROPE



depth and that its length and size, its form, its content and expressive intentions. This is not. Mahler knew it, and if I have succeeded in giving his music justice, you do too.

## Appendix 1

# *That Glorious Mahlerian Orchestra!*

Love him or hate him, few will deny that Mahler was arguably the finest symphonic orchestrator that ever lived. I say “symphonic” because Mahler’s instrumental writing is more than a model of clarity, color, subtlety, and brilliance. It actually furthers the line of symphonic development, supports his music’s formal and structural design, and opens the way to an entirely new world of musical argument and logic that has had an incalculable impact on twentieth-century music.

As Mahler was a master contrapuntal composer who tended to think of music polyphonically (that is, as several independent lines or voices happening at once), you will not find any padding in his orchestration. Every note, line, instrument, color, plink, twitter, thud, grunt, swoosh, and screech is meant to be heard. Mahler’s obsession with clarity above all else led him to an extremely innovative use of a very large orchestra, often so as to have at his disposal an entire group of “mini-orchestras” variously constituted to give his melodies and movements maximum contrast and variety. But rather than continue to talk about it, let’s see Mahler’s orchestration operating in practice.

On the accompanying CD, play track 2, where you will hear Michael Gielen’s performance of the first movement of the Second Symphony. Listen straight through the first 5 minutes and 50 seconds, after which the development section formally

begins. Now go back and listen again, paying special attention to the cellos and basses. They start the symphony together after the opening violin tremolo. Gradually other instruments join in, but they continue on beneath the surface even after the first big cymbal crash. Violins then enter softly with a new, rising tune, but below them the cellos and basses keep up their obsessive muttering, playing what in effect might be called a single, huge melody for more than five and half minutes! This is one brand of Mahler's counterpoint in action, a river of music passing through a landscape of shifting colors and contours.

Later on, at 7:30, you hear another kind of counterpoint: three distinct planes of sound: (1) the marching cellos and basses, (2) the undulating violins, and (3) the melody in long notes on English horn and bass clarinet. You can focus on each line separately or simply take in the entire sound picture as a unit, but however you choose to listen to Mahler, you will very seldom encounter a passage, no matter how lightly scored, in which almost every instrument or section does not have some independent melody, motive, or idea to contribute.

While some of Mahler's ideas last a very long time, and may even use an unvarying tone color throughout, more often he shows as much concern with keeping the timbres of his melodies fresh and ever-changing as in keeping his textures clear. If you take the beginning of the development section, back at about 5:50, and pay attention this time only to the music's surface, to the tunes, you will hear Mahler pass the theme from violins, to horns, to high woodwinds in various combinations, to trumpets, to English horn, to clarinets, to horns and violins, to cellos, to clarinets again (the soft duet at 6:55), and so on, a genuine kaleidoscope of instrumental color.

This ongoing exploration of the infinite possibilities of the symphony orchestra represents the principal reason that it's difficult to say that Mahler ever really finished any of his

symphonies: he revised and tinkered with each one prior to every new performance. His orchestration is not the result of theorizing on paper but rather the result of trial and error, much practical experience, experimentation with acoustics and instrumental placement, and a precise knowledge of what each instrument can and can't do, both singly and in groups.

## Mahler's Orchestra Section by Section

### Strings

Perhaps the most interesting thing about Mahler's vision of the string section lies in what he does not say about it. Both Wagner and Strauss were extremely specific and gave exact numbers for violins, violas, cellos, and basses. Mahler never does. He simply asks that strings be "as numerous as possible" most of the time, while also adding that the basses should have a little gadget attached that permits them to play all the way down to a very low C. This tells us two things about Mahler: first, that he was above all being practical. He knew (even truer in his time than in ours) that no standard-sized string section existed, and as always, he was more concerned with questions of balance and transparency than with sheer numbers.

Second, the role of the strings in the Mahlerian orchestra is not the starring one that it is with Wagner, Strauss, and most other composers (although the strings become more important in the later works than in the earlier ones). Indeed, with the exception of the Sixth, the most classical of all of Mahler's symphonies, not a single work begins with a melody played primarily by the first violins. This is a remarkable fact, when you think about it.

This isn't to say that Mahler underutilizes his violin section. Indeed, he makes it do things that no string section had been asked to do before, particularly in the area of percussive effects. He's very fond of having his players tap the strings with the back of their bows (col legno or "with the wood"), producing a dry clicking sound. As an adjunct to this effect, Mahler invented a technique that translates into English as "stuck with the bow," which basically means that the player should slap the string hard enough so that the hair of the bow rebounds against the wooden stick. In the first movement of the Second Symphony, you can hear the whole string section whacking away (at 14:08), cutting clearly through the texture, despite the fact that brass and percussion are going crazy at the same time.

But of all the things that Mahler does with and to his string players, no effect is more important than the related techniques of portamento and glissando. The first means "leaning" from one note to the next (a clear slide off the note in the direction of the one following), while the second term means "slide from one note to the other, including all the notes in between." The difference between the two terms as Mahler uses them is largely technical and unimportant. Suffice it to say that sometimes it's possible to execute a genuine glissando, at others portamento will do, but in all cases Mahler specifies every instance where he wants it to happen, adding footnotes and other marginalia as necessary. Overindulgence in this effect can make the music sound soupy, sentimental, and cheap, which is often exactly the effect that Mahler wants.

But at other times, as at 17:28 in the first movement of the Second Symphony, where you can hear the glissandos quite clearly in the violins, the impression is one of gentle nostalgia, sweetness, and bittersweet longing. As with all of Mahler's special effects, the degree to which the players honor his requests varies tremendously from orchestra to orchestra

and from conductor to conductor. One of the acid tests of any Mahler performance is the willingness of the players to make a rough, crude, sleazy, tacky, or ugly sound, and nowhere does he encounter more resistance in this respect than from an orchestra's string section.

Finally, a word on the harp. Mahler can correctly be said to have discovered the harp as a melody instrument, and in this connection, he was the first composer to find a poetic use for the instrument's bell-like low notes. These open the Ninth Symphony, for example, and close the Fourth. In the first movement of the Second Symphony, you can hear them tolling gently in transition to the beginning of the development section (from 5:40 on). In his larger symphonies, such as the Second, Third, Sixth, and Eighth, Mahler clearly wants as many harps as possible, but four at a minimum. You will almost never see more than two in performance, generally for financial reasons. On those rare occasions when Mahler does get what he requires, you will be amazed at how well the sound of the massed harps stands against that of the full orchestra, even at the loudest moments.

## Brass

As with the strings, Mahler's treatment of the brass is as interesting for what he does not do as for what he does. No matter how many trumpets, horns, and trombones he may call for, Mahler never in his life used more than a single tuba in any of his symphonies. The reason for this is that multiple tubas only produce muddy, indistinct textures, and having several of them playing in unison does not enhance the clarity of the bass line.

This doesn't, however, mean that Mahler neglected the possibilities of the tuba. In fact, he emancipated that instrument

from being a mere bottom for the trombones. His symphonies abound in solos, most notably at the beginning of the finale of the Sixth and in the Scherzo (third movement) of the Seventh.

When it comes to the other members of the brass family, Mahler's writing is as freewheeling as it gets. All of the symphonies feature lyrical solos for the trumpet, a habit partly the legacy of his childhood near the barracks, partly a gift of Italian opera where the trumpets often double the singer, and partly a result of Mahler's deliberate effort to get away from the strings as the guys who always get to play the tune. The Third, Fifth, and Seventh Symphonies, as well as *Das Lied von der Erde*, all open with brass solos.

In terms of numbers, Mahler greatly multiplied the quantity of brass players in his orchestras. The normal classical or romantic orchestra requires two trumpets. In his Second Symphony, Mahler asks for ten, and four to six is more like the norm for him. Trombone sections traditionally come in threes, but Mahler tends to like four, with additional ones off-stage as needed. The standard four-man horn section appears in Symphonies No. 4, 7, 9, and *Das Lied*. Otherwise Mahler requires anywhere from six to ten, and his symphonies are full of rewarding horn solos (especially in the gigantic Scherzo of the Fifth, where the principal horn is so important that he or she sometimes comes to the front of the stage and plays standing, like a concert violinist). Mahler's horn writing in general partakes of the great German romantic tradition extending back through Wagner to Carl Maria von Weber, whose music Mahler adored—even to the point of finishing an incomplete opera: *Die Drei Pintos* (a delightful, too-little-known work with as much Mahler in it as Weber).

Mahler expects all of his brass players to use mutes where required. This practice is deceptive. Mutes do not necessarily

make brass instruments sound softer; they change the quality of the tone to something nasal and rasping. He's also careful to distinguish between muted horns, which really are softer, and "stopped tones," in which the player sticks his or her fist into the bell of the instrument to create a harsh buzzing sound. If you want to hear how effective this acid sonority can be, check out the opening movement of the Second Symphony from 1:10 onwards to the big cymbal crash. Another advantage to all of these muted and squeezed notes is that they don't cover other instruments, but rather set their tone into higher relief. This allows Mahler to contrive full, fascinating accompaniments using lots of players and instruments without ever obscuring the principal melody.

Most importantly, Mahler's brass instruments play fanfares, tattoos, military signals, and calls to arms. The fanfare is a constant in Mahler, and you hear them loud, soft, onstage, off-stage, echoed in other instruments, muted, unmuted, joyous, threatening, dreamy, and nostalgic. Just as the Mahlerian fingerprint in the strings is portamento/glissando, for the brass it's the fanfare. In the first movement of the Second Symphony, check out the explosion at 9:50, where you can practically see the trumpets shouting "Charge!" as they crash forward (and note their two little muted calls as the noise fades away). The central climax of the movement (from about 13:20 onwards) consists largely of a series of fanfares, on trumpets, timpani, woodwinds, horns, and finally the entire orchestra, as it grinds onward to the recapitulation and the return of the opening theme in the cellos and basses.

## Woodwinds

The woodwind section is in some ways the heart and soul of the Mahlerian orchestra, for the simple reason that the woodwinds

are the orchestral comedians. They also provide the sounds of nature, of birds, and they combine the agility of the strings with the penetrating power of the brass—that is, when used in sufficient numbers. Mahler's symphonies use more wind players on average than anyone else's. The standard orchestra employs woodwinds (flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons) in pairs. With Mahler, four is closer to the usual number for each instrumental type, and it's the traditional extras (piccolos, English horns, E-flat and bass clarinets, and contrabassoons) that often occur in pairs. To gain even more volume at big moments, Mahler often requests that the oboes and clarinets play with their bells up, pointing the mouth of the instrument directly at the audience and blasting away. Mahlerians in the know always check at this point to see if the conductor and his or her players follow Mahler's instructions: it's a good indication of their commitment to the cause.

Whether humorous, spiteful, sarcastic, or ironic, woodwinds dominate Mahler's scherzos: witness the drunken clarinets in the Second Symphony, the bird and animal imitations in the Third, the vicious cackling and awkward games in the Sixth, and the clunky peasant dances in the Ninth (second movement). Elsewhere, Mahler uses his woodwind section the way an editor uses one of those yellow highlighters. They give a bold, hard edge to his melodic lines, a sharp tang to the upper notes of the violins, and an extra cut and thrust to lower strings and brass. He delights in their shrillness. Listen to the wind entrances at the opening of the Second Symphony (including the passage with stopped horns at 1:10 noted above), and notice how they hold their own against the strings and brass as the first climax arrives.

If the Mahlerian fingerprint for the strings is the portamento/*glissando*, and for the brass it is the fanfare, then for the winds it is the trill, or *shake* as it's sometimes called. Mahler loves to

include this nose-thumbing gesture in so many of his quicker melodies, or as a burbling and subversive accompaniment to a tune on other instruments singing above it. A classic passage illustrating this point occurs in the second movement of the Seventh Symphony, just after the opening horn calls (CD Track 4, at 0:33). The entire wind section builds a huge crescendo (culminating in a scream, I might add), consisting of chattering trills, like a swarm of buzzing insects. And yet the trill can also be glorious, as when piccolos and flutes decorate majestic horn fanfares in the finale of the Second Symphony. With every such gesture in Mahler, if it has more than one meaning, you can be sure that he knows them all and uses them accordingly.

### Percussion

Mahler was acknowledged even in his own lifetime as a pioneer in the use of percussion instruments, although this was not necessarily regarded as a compliment. Until he came along, the triangle was the only percussion instrument aside from timpani with an accepted place in the German symphonic orchestra, and then only rarely. Bass drum, cymbals, and triangle were known as "Turkish" instruments and reserved for music descriptive of exotic locales or battle marches (as in Beethoven's Ninth or Haydn's "Military" Symphony).

In Mahler's day, extensive use of percussion was considered in poor taste and incompatible with the German symphonic style. In Russia, composers like Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov were doing wonderful things with large percussion sections (although not in symphonies), while Liszt, the inventor of the symphonic poem, similarly had no such inhibitions. But even Wagner (the archrevolutionary of late romantic German music) remained very conservative in his use of percussion,

despite important innovations in so many other areas of orchestral practice.

Mahler, for his part, couldn't have cared less about such theoretical notions of musical purity. His goal was to use every expressive means at his disposal, and one of the most significant ways in which he enriched the vocabulary of orchestral music was through his creative use of musical gestures: a single chord, a rhythm, a crash, a scream, or a thud. Many of these simple sounds involve percussion, and entire symphonies can take their characteristic color from them. Examples include the sleigh bells that open the Fourth, the cowbells in the Sixth, and the quiet tam-tam strokes that always accompany Mahler's funeral marches.

So Mahler's percussion writing is not decoration: it is necessary to the symphonic argument and serves a real structural purpose. Listen carefully to the quiet gong beats underpinning the trudging cellos and basses from 4:40 in the Second Symphony's first movement, and to the even more ghostly return of the same music from 18:45. Understanding musical form involves your memory, and every time after this that you hear a soft stroke on the tam-tam, you will remember that first time, whether or not the rest of the music that accompanied the initial sound returns. This is one important way that Mahler binds his movements together—using simple tone colors as mnemonic cues.

Here is the complete list of percussion instruments (aside from timpani) that Mahler asks for at one time or another in his symphonies: triangle, crash cymbals, suspended cymbals, bass drum, bass drum with cymbal attached, mallet glockenspiel, keyboard glockenspiel, high tam-tam, standard tam-tam, low tam-tam, piano, celesta, snare drum, slapstick, rute (bundle of sticks beaten on the bass drum case), a small wooden stick (also tapped on the bass drum case), military parade drum, hammer,

cowbells, steel bars, deep bells, tubular chimes, tambourine, xylophone, and sleigh bells.

On average, Mahler requires from three to five extra players to handle his percussion parts, and there's always a lot of running around as well: onstage and offstage, extra hands needed for isolated timpani strokes, or cymbal crashes, or exotica such as cowbells.

It's impossible to exaggerate just how radical Mahler's approach was musically (wider cultural issues aside) at a time when the quality of most percussion sections, in German orchestras especially, was simply terrible. He would travel from one performance of his music to the next with his own percussion section in tow, even scheduling special rehearsals for the percussionists alone simply to explain to the players what he was trying to achieve. In all of this he was regarded as very eccentric.

Wagner used two pairs of timpani in his "Ring" operas. Mahler often uses two sets, usually of three to four drums each, and like Berlioz, he is careful to specify which type of mallet the players should use: soft-headed sticks or hard, wooden ones (he also asks for mutes on more than one occasion). He was one of the first composers to write for timpani melodically: the kettledrums actually get the tune in the third movement of the Second Symphony and the first movement of the Fifth, and they always participate fully in the symphonic development of themes and motives, especially in the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Symphonies. Every symphony without exception includes important timpani solos, and Mahler expects the players to have at their disposal a range of notes so wide that special instruments have been constructed simply to play them accurately.

I suggest that you listen to the passage in the first movement of the Second Symphony beginning at 11:00. In the space of a

few seconds, you hear: (1) woodwinds accompanied by triangle, (2) a solo bass drum beating ominously (the Mahlerian thud), (3) the opening gesture of the cellos and basses separated by two Mahlerian crashes, one for high tam-tam with timpani, the other for low tam-tam with bass drum, (4) the Mahler rhythm (*dum dadum*), hammered out by solo timpani, first loudly and then softly echoed, while the strings play an acid tremolo “on the bridge” of their instruments over a soft roll on the low tam-tam and bass drum.

Here, in some thirty seconds, you can hear everything that makes Mahler’s orchestration so special. It’s a passage of pure symphonic development; there’s no fat, or gratuitous wash of color for its own sake. Every detail amplifies or elaborates something that we have heard before and reveals it in a new light. In the space of ten bars the dynamics go from triple forte (*fff*) to quadruple piano (*pppp*). Believe me when I tell you that no one achieved this sort of meaningful deployment of percussion timbre in the service of musical logic until Mahler found a way to incorporate a vocabulary of simple musical gestures and noises into the flow of symphonic development. And this is what distinguishes Mahler’s orchestral writing in general from that of so many others: every note of it contributes to the music’s expressive purpose and helps to clarify its formal progress.

## Appendix 2

# The Symphonies at a Glance

It may not be possible to reduce any complex piece of music to a mere table or chart, but one of the most interesting things about Mahler is that he used musical gestures—simple sounds, noises, stylistic archetypes, or even instrumental colors (timbre)—as a method of characterizing his symphonic movements and a means of binding them together. The first three tables below summarize some of these gestures and tell you where you will find them. “Marches and Dances” pretty much speaks for itself; “Screams, Crashes, and Thuds” includes some of the repertoire of dramatic sound effects—bass drum thuds, tam-tam crashes, and instrumental screams—that color Mahler’s special sound world. The aspiration or redemption theme is a motive that runs through almost all of Mahler’s work, appearing in different contexts. All of these ideas are described in the individual essays at the appropriate points.

The last two tables summarize two separate characteristics. Table 4 tells you where you will find humor, perhaps the least well appreciated quality of classical music in general, and of Mahler in particular. It colors more of his music than you might at first think. Not all of this humor is happy. Sometimes it’s bitter or ironic, but either way, it’s an expressive fact even more outstanding (if perhaps less obvious) than the sorrow and

neurotic despair that seem to monopolize most of the attention when the expressive range of Mahler's music generally comes up for discussion. Finally, table 5 shows you just how varied Mahler's symphonies are in their arrangement of movements and how these movements are grouped to create formal balance and always new answers to questions of large-scale symphonic structure.

Table 1  
Marches and Dances

Symphony No.	Wallersteiner/Mahler Movement No(s)	March Movement No(s)
1	2	3
2	2 and 3	1 and 5
3	2 and 3	1
4	2 and 3	1
5	3	1 and 2
6	2 (if Scherzo 2nd)	1 and 4
7	3	1 and 2
8	0	1
<i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>	0	4 and 6
9	2	1 and 3
10	2 and 4	0

Table 2  
Screams, Crashes, and Thuds

Symphony No.	Scream Movement No(s)	Crash Movement No(s)	Thud Movement No(s)
1	4	4	1 and 3
2	3 and 5	5	1 and 3
3	1 and 3	1	1
4	1, 2 and 3	1 and 3	2 and 3
5	1 and 2	2	1, 2 and 5
6	1, 3 and 4	Scherzo and 4	Scherzo and 4
7	2 and 3	5	3
8	0	1 and 2	0
<i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>	1	1	1 and 6
9	3 and 4	1	1 and 2
10	1 and 5	5	3

Table 3  
Appearances of the "Aspiration" or "Redemption" Theme

Symphony No.	Movement No(s)
1	n/a
2	5
3	1 and 4
4	3
5	4 and 5
6	4
7	5
8	1 and 2
<i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>	n/a
9	1 and 4

Table 4  
Mahlerian Humor

Symphony No.	Irony/Parody Movement No(s)	Wit Movement No(s)
1	3	1
2	3	2
3	1, 5	3
4	2	1, 3, 4
5		3, 5
6	2	
7	2, 3	4, 5
8		
<i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>	5	3, 4
9	2, 3	

Table 5  
Large-scale Structure

Symphony No.	No. of Movements	Order <sup>a</sup> (f=fast, s=slow)	Focus
1	4 (orig. 5) <sup>b</sup>	f, (s), f, s, f	finale
2	5	f, s, f, s, f	finale
3	6	(f), [s], [s], f, s, f	first movement
4	4	f, f, s, f	third movement
5	5	[s], f, [s], f	third movement
6	4	f, f, s, f (or f, s, f, f)	finale
7	5	f, s, f, s, f	first movement
8	2	(f), [s], [s], f	first movement
<i>Das Lied von der Erde</i>	6	[s], [s], f, [s]	finale
9	4	s, f, f, s	first movement
10	5	s, f, f, s	finale

a. Movements in brackets [ ] indicate Mahler's division in parts or, in the case of *Das Lied von der Erde*, my own suggestion in keeping with Mahler's practice.

b. Symphony No. 1's original second movement was later eliminated.

GUSTAV MAHLER

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murders the blond younger, leaving as evidence of his crime a bone. When fashioned into a flute by a minstrel, the bone recounts the murder, first to the minstrel, then to the elder brother and queen at their wedding celebrations. This causes a cataclysm of Wagnerian proportions involving the collapse of the queen's castle. Possibly the choice of two brothers stemmed from childhood traumas (as is well-known, Mahler's family was no stranger to death, and he was particularly scarred by the death of his younger brother Ernst in 1874); certainly the composition of the work was not easy.

Mahler's *Das klagende Lied* ('Mein erstes Werk, in dem ich mich als "Mahler" gefunden' — 'the first work in which I found myself as "Mahler"') was and remains a remarkable Opus 1. Partly this is a reflection of its numerous anticipations of later works, notably the first two symphonies (but also the Sixth and Tenth). Even more striking than this, however, is the quality of the invention and the boldness of the conception. Some of its virtuosic handling of the orchestra derives from the various revisions which Mahler made to the cantata in 1893 and 1898, but this does not detract from the originality of the work. Its literary sources are complex. The theme and title derive from a story by Ludwig Bechstein, with the addition of elements from the Brothers Grimm and Martin Greif, but the story is found in several folk cultures (a variant forms the basis of Harrison Birtwistle's *Bow Down*). The fundamental element in all sources is sibling rivalry, sometimes of brother and sister, sometimes of sisters. In Mahler's version of the tale (which he wrote himself like a true disciple of Wagner), two brothers aspire to marry a 'proud queen'. The dark elder brother

The oft-cited evidence that Mahler intended *Das klagende Lied* as an opera is too slight to be completely convincing; even if its origins were theatrical, these have hardly survived into the work itself. But what type of work is it? The cantata is hardly one of the central genres of the nineteenth century, and it might be more accurate to refer to *Das klagende Lied* as a choral ballad (with Mendelssohn's *Erste Walpurgisnacht* as a distant model) with soloists and a Wagnerian orchestral and motivic apparatus. As Donald Mitchell has pointed out, the Wagnerian influence is more likely to be of works like *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* than the *Ring*, which is consistent with the mediaeval chivalry of Mahler's poem. The latter is also suffused with forest imagery (the murder takes place in a wood) which is a feature of wider Romantic provenance. The poem was finished in March 1878, and the music by 1 November 1880. At this stage it was conceived as a work in three parts, with the titles 'Waldmärchen', 'Der Spielmann', and 'Hochzeitsstück'; they correspond roughly to the murder, the bone's song to the minstrel, and the playing of the bone flute at the festivities. This neat scheme concealed a tautology: the murder is told twice, in Part I and, as a narrative within a narrative, in Part II. Possibly this counted against the work when it was submitted to the Vienna Conservatory for the Beethoven Prize in 1881. Equally its allegiance to a 'progressive' style may have earned it the dislike of the jury (which included Brahms and Hans Richter). The work failed to win the prize (an event which Mahler blamed for thrusting him into his life-long career as a conductor in the theatre). In fairness to the jury, it must be admitted that Liszt, a high-priest of the moderns, saw little good in the music and text. Mahler had clearly found the individual voice that many musicians were to resist until well into the twentieth century.

Mahler eventually solved the problem of the twice-told tale by omitting 'Waldmärchen', which remained unknown until radio broadcasts in the 1930s. Since it has become more widely known in the last decades, 'Waldmärchen' can clearly be seen as the most diffuse part of the work. Its prolonged depiction of the natural world in which the murder takes place contains music attractive enough for Mahler to re-use in *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (No. 4) and the slow movement of the First Symphony. But this nostalgically beautiful depiction of the blond brother falling asleep in the forest overshadows the murder itself, which is more menacingly depicted in the bone flute's song to the minstrel. Mahler's decision to suppress 'Waldmärchen' is quite justifiable on aesthetic grounds, and he supplied no evidence that he wished *Das klagende Lied* to be anything other than a two-part work for the concert hall. In spite of the role of 'Waldmärchen' as a thematic exposition (notably of the numerous horn calls and martial figures),

the other parts render their motivic content clearly enough for the musico-dramatic process. 'Waldmärchen' is nonetheless an indispensable document for our knowledge of Mahler's development, and justifies itself more easily on disc than in the concert hall. A further problem which exercised Mahler during his various revisions was whether or not to use an extra wind band in 'Hochzeitsstück'; this was excised, possibly in 1893 (when 'Waldmärchen' may also have been cut), but later restored for publication in 1902.

In spite of the Romantic beauty of 'Waldmärchen' and the brazen clamour of 'Hochzeitsstück', 'Der Spielmann' contains the most distinctively Mahlerian music of the work. The first bars show him taking a typically Brucknerian opening formula (motive against tremolo) and adapting it to his more explosive purposes. Much of the opening paragraph foreshadows Mahler's later ability to conjure atmosphere less from melodies and themes than from wisps of ideas and sonorous effects. Horn fanfares and march themes are justified by the subject but survived to become integral parts of his symphonic style. The pacing theme of the minstrel has a type of bass line that is immediately identifiable as a Mahlerian archetype. The tension between major and minor modes which was to dominate Mahler's music as much as Schubert's is already present. But perhaps the most striking moment is the bleak wash of colour that sweeps over the music at the bone's words, 'Ach Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein'. Reminiscent though this may be of Brünnhilde's awakening chords in *Siegfried*, it is the moment when Mahler demonstrates most potently his music's capacity for tragedy. Its repetition in 'Hochzeitsstück' is hardly less telling; the two moments are worth studying for the manner in which Mahler varies his orchestration without obscuring the dramatic point. 'Hochzeitsstück' begins with an orchestral tumult that blends festive noises with a sense of menace (again the product of conflict between major and minor). The similarity of this to passages in the finale of the First Symphony eventually does lead to a clear pre-echo of that movement at the catastrophe. In spite of the careful interweaving of the festive music with the minstrel's approach and the bone's song, 'Hochzeitsstück' does not quite have the firm focus of 'Der Spielmann', though its final pages have the kind of black finality which we find in the Sixth Symphony (both end in Mahler's 'tragic' A minor). Whether listened to in three parts or two, however, *Das klagende Lied* is a grimly bracing prelude to the more extensive sound-world of Mahler's symphonies.

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JOAN RODGERS



LINDA FINNIE



Fritz Cotton

### Waldmärchen

Es war eine stolze Königin,  
Gar lieblich ohne Maßßen;  
Kein Ritter stand nach ihrem Sinn,  
Sie wollt' sie alle hassen.

O weh! Du wonnigliches Weib!  
Wem blühet wohl dein süßer Leib?

Im Wald eine rote Blume stand,  
Ach, so schön wie die Königinne;  
Welch Rittersmann die Blume fand,  
Der konnt' die Frau gewinnen!

O weh! Du stolze Königin!

Wann bricht er wohl, dein stolzer Sinn?

Zwei Brüder zogen zum Walde hin,  
Sie wollten die Blume suchen;  
Der Eine hold und von mildem Sinn,  
Der Andre konnte nur fluchen!

O Ritter, schlimmer Ritter mein,  
O liebstest du das Fluchen sein!

Als sie so zogen eine Weile;  
Da kamen sie zu scheiden;  
Das war ein Suchen nun im Eilf  
Im Wald und auf der Heiden.

Ihr Ritter mein, im schnellen Lauf,  
Wer findet wohl die Blume?

Der lunge zieht durch Wald und Heid;  
Er braucht nicht lang zu gehen;  
Bald sieht er von Ferne bei der Weid;  
Die rote Blume steh'n.

Die hat er auf den Hut gesteckt,  
Und dann zur Ruhe sich hingestreckt.

Der Andre zieht im wilden Hang,  
Umsonst durchsucht er die Heide,  
Und als der Abend hernieder sank,  
Da kommt er zur grünen Weide!

O weh! Wen er dort schlafen fand,  
Die Blume am Hut, am grünen Band!

### Forest Legend

Once there was an arrogant queen,  
Fair beyond all measure;  
No knight, she thought, was worthy of her,  
She viewed them all with hatred.

Alas, you proud and lovely lady!  
For whom does your sweet body bloom?

In the forest a red flower  
Grew, lovely as the queen;  
A knight who found that flower  
Could claim her as his wife!

Alas, you proud and lovely queen!  
When will your haughty spirit break?

Two brothers came into the wood  
To seek that wondrous flower;  
One was fair and mild of mien,  
The other could but curse.

O knight, my evil-spoken knight,  
Desist from your abuse!

When they had paced a little while  
They parted from each other,  
And now in haste they both did search  
The forest and the heath.

You knights in headlong rivalry,  
Who first will find the flower?

The younger looked through wood and heath  
But had not far to go;  
From afar he spied the red flower  
Growing by a willow.

He stuck his prize into his hat  
And then lay down to rest.

The other climbed the wild hillside  
And vainly searched the heath,  
And at last when evening fell  
Came to the green willow.

Alas, whom saw he sleeping there,  
The flower in his hat's green ribbon?

Du wonnigliche Nachtigall,  
Und Rotkehlchen hinter der Hecken,  
Den armen Ritter erwecken.

Du rote Blume hinter'm Hut,  
Du blinkst und glänzest ja wie Blut!

Ein Auge blickt in wilder Freud',  
Dess' Schein hat nicht gelogen;

Ein Schwert von Stahl glänzt ihm zur Seit',  
Das hat er nun gezogen.

Der Alte lacht unter'm Weidenbaum,  
Der lunge lächelt wie im Traum.

Ihr Blumen, was seid ihr vom Tau so schwer?  
Mir scheint, das sind gar Tränen!

Ihr Winde, was weht ihr so traurig daher,  
Was will euer Raunen und Wähnen?

"Im Wald, auf der grünen Heide,  
Da steht eine alte Weide."

O now, you lovely nightingale  
and robin rebreast in the hedge;  
with your sweet song will you not wake  
the poor knight sleeping there?

O red flower shining in his hat,  
you glow like crimson blood!

In savage joy there gleams an eye  
whose look has told no lie;  
a sword of steel shines at his side,  
and this he now has drawn.

By the willow the elder laughs,  
the younger smiles as in a dream.

Flowers, why are you so heavy with dew?  
I think that you are weeping!

Winds, why so sadly do you blow?  
What does your whispering mean?

"In the forest, on the greensward  
stands an ancient willow."

HANS PETER BLOCHWITZ



for/irm Thode

**Der Spielmann**

Beim Weidenbaum, im kühlen Tann,  
Da flattern die Dohlen und Raben,  
Da liegt ein blonder Rittersmann  
Unter Blättern und Blüten vergraben.

Dort ist's so lind und voll von Duft,  
Als ging ein Weinen durch die Luft!  
O Leide, Leide!

Ein Spielmann zog einst des Weges daher,  
Da sah er ein Knöchlein blitz'n.  
Er hob es auf, als wär's ein Rohr,  
Wollt' sich eine Flöte d'raus schnitzen.

O Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein,  
Das wird ein seltsam Spielen sein!  
O Leide, weh! O Leide!

Der Spielmann setzt die Flöte an,  
Und läßt sie laut erklingen:  
O Wunder, was nun da begann!  
Welch' seltsam traurig Singen!

Es klingt so traurig und doch so schön!  
Wer's hört, der möcht' vor Lied vergeh'n!  
O Leide, Leide!

"Ach Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein!  
Das muß ich dir nun klagen:  
Um ein schönfarbig Blümlein  
Hat mich mein Bruder erschlagen!"

Im Walde bleicht mein junger Leib;  
Mein Bruder freit ein wonnig Weib!  
O Leide, Leide! Weh!"

Der Spielmann ziehet in die Welt,  
Läßt's überall erklingen.  
"Ach weh, ach weh, ihr lieben Leut!  
Was soll denn euch mein Singen?"

Hinauf muß ich zu des Königs Saal  
Hinauf! zu des Königs holdem Gemahl!  
Was soll denn euch mein Singen?"  
O Leide, weh! O Leide!

**The Minstrel**

By the willow, set amid cool pines  
there where jackdaws and ravens flutter,  
lies a fair-headed knight  
buried under leaves and blossoms.

It is as mild and fragrant there  
as if weeping filled the air.  
O sorrow, sorrow!

Once a minstrel passed that way  
and saw a small bone gleaming,  
he picked it up, as if a reed,  
and thought to make himself a flute

O minstrel, my dear minstrel  
strange music that will make!  
O sorrow, woe! Sorrow!

To his lips the minstrel put the flute  
and loudly made it sound,  
O marvellous what now began,  
what strange and mournful singing!

So sad, yet so lovely did it sound  
that one hearing it might die of sorrow!  
O sorrow, sorrow!

"O minstrel, my dear minstrel,  
now I must lament to you:  
for a flower of lovely hue  
my brother struck me dead."

In the woods my young bones whiten:  
my brother woos a beauty!  
O sorrow, sorrow! Woe!"

The minstrel wanders far and wide,  
and everywhere his song is heard.  
"Alas and larkaday, good folk!  
What make you of my singing?"

I must go up to the royal hall,  
up to the king's lovely bride!  
What make you of my singing?"  
O sorrow, woe! Sorrow!

ROBERT HAYWARD



Fritz Curzon

**Hochzeitsstück**

Vom hohen Felsen erglänzt das Schloß.  
Die Zinken erschall'n und Drommetten erschall'n.  
Dort sitzt der mutigen Ritter Troß.  
Die Frau'n mit goldenen Ketten.

Was will wohl der jubelnde, löbliche Schall?  
Was leuchtet und glänzt im Königssaal?  
O Freude, heh! Freude!

Und weißt du's nicht, warum die Freud?  
Heil daß ich dir's sagen kann!  
Die Königin hält Hochzeit heut!  
Mit dem jungen Rittersmann!

Seht hin! die stolze Königin!  
Heut' bricht er doch, ihr stolzer Sinn!  
O Freude, heh! Freude!

Was ist der König so stumm und bleich?  
Hört nicht des Iubels Tone!  
Sieht nicht die Gäste, stolz und reich,  
Sieht nicht der Königin holde Schöne!

Was ist der König so bleich und stumm?  
Was geht ihm wohl im Kopf herum?  
O Leide, weh, oh weh!

Ein Spielmann tritt zur Türe herein.  
Was mag's wohl mit dem Spielmann sein?  
O Leide, Leide! Weh!

"Ach Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein!  
Das muß ich dir, nun klagen!  
Um ein schönfarbig Blümlein  
Hat mich mein Bruder erschlagen!  
O Leide! Weh, o Leide!

Im Walde bleicht mein junger Leib  
Mein Bruder freit ein wonnig Weib!  
O Leide! Weh, o Leide!

Auf springt der König von seinem Thron!  
Und blickt auf die Hochzeitrund!  
Und nimmt die Flöte in frevelndem Hohn  
Und setzt sie selbst an den Mund!

**Wedding Piece**

From the rocky height the castle gleams,  
The cornets and the drums resound.  
There sit the valiant band of knights  
and ladies bedecked with golden chains

What means the festive, joyful sound?  
What shines and glitters in the royal hall?  
O joy, hurrah! joy!

And know you not the reason for this joy?  
Ha, the answer I can tell you!  
The queen is being wed today  
to that young knight there!

See, over there, the fair, proud queen!  
Her haughty spirit will be broken!  
O joy, hurrah! joy!

Why is the king so mute and pale?  
Does he not hear the jubilant sounds,  
not see the proud and wealthy guests,  
the grace and beauty of the queen?

Why is the king so pale and mute?  
What is weighing on his mind?  
O sorrow! Woe, woe!

A minstrel enters at the door,  
what can the minstrel's purpose be?  
O sorrow, sorrow! Woe!

"O minstrel, my dear minstrel,  
now I must lament to you:  
for a flower of lovely hue  
my brother struck me dead!  
O sorrow, woe! Sorrow!

In the woods my young bones whiten,  
my brother woos a beauty!"  
O sorrow, sorrow! Woe!

From his throne the king springs up  
and gazes at the wedding guests,  
takes up the flute in wanton scorn  
and puts it to his own lips!

O Schrecken, was nun da erklang!  
Hört ihr die Märe, todesbang!

"Ach Bruder, lieber Bruder mein!  
Du hast mich ja erschlagen!  
Nun bläst du auf meinem Totenbein!  
Dess' muß ich ewig klagen!

Was hast du mein junges Leben,  
Dem Tode hingegeben?"  
O Leid:, weh! O Leide!

Am Boden liegt die Königin!  
Die Pauken verstummen und Zinken.  
Mit Schrecken die Ritter und Frauen fleh'n.  
Die alten Mauern sinken!

Die Lichter verloschen im Königssaal.  
Was ist es wohl mit dem Hochzeitsmahl?  
Ach Leide!

O horror, what now is sounded!  
Hear the tale of mortal dread!

"Ah brother, dear brother mine,  
it was you who struck me dead!  
Now you play upon my whitened bone:  
that I must forever lament!

Why did you give away to death  
my life in all its youth?"  
O sorrow, woe! O sorrow!

The queen falls to the ground!  
The cornets and drums fall silent.  
The knights and ladies flee in terror,  
the ancient walls collapse!

The lights are darkened in the royal hall.  
What has happened to the wedding-feast?  
O sorrow!

English translation © Lionel Salter

The internationally celebrated soprano **Joan Rodgers** was born in Cumbria. After graduating from the University of Liverpool with an Honours degree in Russian she entered the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. In 1981 she won the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Scholarship.

Joan Rodgers first came to international attention in 1982 as Pamina in a new production of *Die Zauberflöte* at the Festival of Aix-en-Provence. Since her debut in 1984 she has appeared regularly at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; roles for English National Opera have included Pamina, Gilda, Nanetta, and The Countess in Graham Vick's highly successful production of *Figaro's Wedding*. Operatic performances overseas have included appearances in Brussels, Chicago, Florence, Madrid, Munich, Paris, Vancouver and Venice.

Joan Rodgers enjoys an equally successful career as a concert and recital singer: concert engagements overseas have included regular appearances with such conductors as Daniel Barenboim, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Zubin Mehta and Esa-Pekka Salonen. She appears regularly in London, including since 1988 appearances at the BBC Promenade Concerts.

**Linda Finnie** was born in Scotland and studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. In 1974 she won the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Award, and three years later the Kathleen Ferrier Prize at the 's-Hertogenbosch International Competition. Miss Finnie's concert career has taken her to Australasia, the USA, the Far East and all over Europe. She broadcasts frequently on Radio 3, as well as being a regular guest at the Proms and the Edinburgh Festival. She has worked with many international orchestras and opera companies, under conductors such as Abbado, Maelzel, Barenboim, Jansons, Dohnanyi, Previn, Rattle and Tate. Such was her success at the 1988 Kupfer/ Barenboim Ring Cycle at Bayreuth, she was reinvited for the following five seasons.

Linda Finnie is an exclusive recording artist with Chandos Records for concert and recital work.

The loveliest girl in Vienna  
Was Alma, the smartest as well  
Once you picked her up on your  
antenna  
You'd never be free of her spell

Her lovers were many and varied  
From the day she began her beguine  
There were three famous ones  
whom she  
married  
And God knows how many between

Alma, tell us  
All modern women are jealous  
Which of your magical wands  
Got you Gustav and Walter and  
Franz

The first one she married was  
Mahler  
Whose buddies all knew him as  
Gustav  
And each time he saw her he'd holler  
"Ach, that is the fräulein I moost  
hav"



Their marriage, however, was murder  
He'd scream to the heavens above  
"I'm writing '*Das Lied von der Erde*'  
And she only wants to make love!"

Alma, tell us  
All modern women are jealous  
You should have a statue in bronze  
For bagging Gustav and Walter and Franz

While married to Gus, she met Gropius  
And soon she was swinging with Walter  
Gus died, and her tear drops were copious  
She cried all the way to the altar

But he would work late at the Bauhaus  
And only come home now and then  
She said, "What am I running, a chow house  
It's time to change partners again"

Alma, tell us  
All modern women are jealous

Though you didn't even use Ponds  
You got Gustav and Walter and Franz

While married to Walt she'd met Werfel  
And he too was caught in her net  
He married her, but he was carefel  
'Cause Alma was no Bernadette

And that is the story of Alma  
Who knew how to receive and to give  
The body that reached her embalma  
Was one that had known how to live

Alma, tell us  
How can they help being jealous  
Ducks always envy the swans  
Who get Gustav and Walter  
You never did falter  
With Gustav and Walter and Franz